

# North-east COVID-19 observatory: issue 6.

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# North-East COVID-19

## Observatory

Issue 6—27th July 2020



### Welcome

Welcome to our sixth themed issue regarding COVID-19. The focus is on care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue signposts you to useful resources concerning this topic. We know that there is a wealth of information available and we feel that in having each issue themed, you can see at a glance what is available and keep copies of the Observatory issues for reference. The bulletin is available two-weekly and will have a dedicated theme and contain news, professional matters, and relevant professional and light reading. Each issue will have a guest contributor with a specialist interest in the chosen theme. We really would appreciate feedback on these Observatory publications and do want your feedback on any of the Observatory issues, if you have any comments please do e-mail Angela Kydd ([a.kydd@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:a.kydd@rgu.ac.uk)).

### What do you think of the Observatory?

We would also be grateful for you to take 2 minutes to fill in this very short survey. We have an Amazon voucher of £20 for one lucky respondent! <https://robertgordonuniversity.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/north-east-covid-19-observatory>

### Fortnightly Theme: Care Homes and COVID-19

We are delighted that our guest writer this issue is Dr Donald Macaskill, Chief Executive of Scottish Care.



*When the story of Covid19's first wave is written, the impact upon care homes and especially those with dementia will figure prominently. In the weeks and months that lie ahead I hope that lessons will be learned and responses made not from the basis of knee-jerk reaction but with solid reflective analysis.*

*One of the critical lessons which appear to be self-evident, at least to me, is the importance of including social care in processes of planning and preparation. This was palpably not the case in the pandemic planning (such as it was) before 2020 and was, in my opinion, not the case in the early stages of this current outbreak. Involvement and engagement is crucial to enable a consistent and accurate understanding of what happens in a care home. In too many instances we have witnessed 'experts' in disciplines devoid of understanding social care, especially care homes, make decisions for and presumptions about what happens in a care home. We cannot repeat these same mistakes as the consequence is counted not in policy mis-steps but in lives. So, into the future colleagues in public health, community and primary health will need to work*

*much closer alongside their social care fellow professionals in order to arrive at real-life, workable, collaborative outcomes.*

*Another lesson I think we all need to acknowledge is that in preparation for a second wave and a potential peak of winter flu, that we need to re-consider the nature and extent of the lockdown measures which we have taken thus far in our care home sector. Primary to that should be the inclusion, participation, engagement and voice of residents and their families. I think it is increasingly shocking that the autonomy and human rights of residents is continuously being ignored and put to the side. Actions in the first stages of a public health emergency were necessarily interventionist but as time moves on (now 18 weeks at time of writing) then the failure to give voice to those most impacted by infection prevention and control practices is inexcusable. I have had to use one phrase more than any during this pandemic – and that has been to remind folks that a care home is not a unit, or institution, or ward but a home, someone's home intrinsic to which is their right to make decisions for themselves.*

## Support for Care Home Staff

Sometimes it is hard to talk about how you feel when surrounded by trauma and anxiety. **Faith in Older People** has set up 'LISTENING AND CARING IN CONFIDENCE' – a free on-line service for care home and care at home staff. To access the service please [click here](#).

The 'Listeners' are all experienced and qualified and are giving their time on a voluntary basis. Self-compassion and kindness are important to enable you to care for others and Listening and Caring in Confidence is a step to help all staff do this.

Maureen O'Neill, Chair of Faith in Older People states that '*It is important to emphasise that it is OK not to be OK and the opportunity to talk can help to prevent anxiety. This free service is independent and there is no monitoring or reporting except for the numbers of people who use the service. The aim is to provide an oasis of time for staff to simply off-load. The wellbeing of staff in our care homes and care at home must be a priority; their health and resilience are essential in supporting those vulnerable older people who are dependent on their care. We recognise that this pandemic has put an enormous strain on staff as they have dealt with unprecedented situations which have left staff feeling vulnerable and perhaps fearful of the situation for those for whom they care, themselves and their families. We know that this all takes a toll.*'

Faith in Older People has worked with care home staff over the years in relation to considering what matters to residents and older people in the community and appreciate the commitment and care that staff have shown over the past few difficult months.

## Get Involved

COVID-19 has brought about significant change and impact to the way we interact with, and experience social care. [Scottish Care](#) is currently undertaking a programme of work to understand people's experiences of social care during the pandemic. The two people involved, Becca Young, Policy & Research Manager, and Dr Tara French, Technology & Digital Innovation Lead, would like to speak with people who access social care services such as home care or care home support, or who have family or friends who are currently supported by these services. They would be keen to hear your experiences of these services during the pandemic including how support may have been different, what has been positive and what you would like to see in the future. You can choose to share your experiences either through an online survey or Tara and Becca can

arrange a telephone or online call to speak with you. More information is available on the website: <https://scottishcare.org/project/collective-care-future/>. To get involved in the programme or to discuss any questions you have please contact: Becca or Tara at [carefutures@scottishcare.org](mailto:carefutures@scottishcare.org) or Telephone: 01292 270240

## Resources

There are a wealth of helpful resources for care home staff, residents and families and friends. We have selected a wide range of Scotland specific resources and two UK resources that we hope you will find helpful.

**The Scottish Government** has published a document detailing COVID-19 clinical and practice guidance for adult care homes in Scotland This document sets out arrangements that must be put in place to ensure appropriate clinical and care professionals across Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) take direct responsibility for the clinical support required for each care home in their Board area. It is a comprehensive 42 page document and you can access it [here](#).

**Health Protection Scotland** offers advice for care home staff dealing with the threat and actuality of COVID-19. It covers both care home settings, nursing home and residential care where appropriate. The guidance is updated regularly. You can access it [here](#).

**The Care Inspectorate** have created a list of most popular questions around COVID-19 and care homes. It explores issues from children & young people and residential services to care at home. You can access this [here](#). The Care Inspectorate have also produced information to support contact with loved ones during the pandemic. They have published [a guide to keeping in touch](#), with practical information on using apps and mobile devices so loved ones can stay in touch when those they care for can't receive visitors.

**The National Wellbeing Hub** is a Scottish website that provides resources that will help health and social care staff, carers, volunteers and their families find support to cope with challenges faced during the coronavirus pandemic. You can access it [here](#).

**The Scottish Council for Learning Disabilities** website has published easy read information about COVID-19. You can access it [here](#).

**Alzheimer Scotland** have created a suite of resources for people with dementia, their carers and families to use throughout the coronavirus pandemic, which you can access [here](#).

**The Social Care Institute for Excellence** has launched a new hub on the their website, which gives guidance, resources and best practice advice for care homes and care staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Includes guidance on infection control, dementia, and autism and learning disabilities SCIE hub. It provides an additional resource for carers who support care home residents living with dementia. This includes clinical situations focusing on understanding signs of COVID-19, helping residents with confusion, managing behavioural challenges and end-of-life care. <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/dementia/care-homes>

**The British Geriatrics Society** have produced guidelines on Managing the COVID-19 pandemic in care homes for older people. The guidelines provide key recommendations to assist care home staff and the NHS who work with them to support residents through COVID-19. It covers areas such as identifying residents who may have COVID-19, isolating them, receiving residents from hospital, decision about escalation of care to hospital and supporting care home residents and staff. The original document was published in March and this document is the third version (June 2020). You can access it [here](#).

## Resources from AGE and AGE Platform-EU

### Updates on COVID-19, Human Rights, and Care

- AGE, the European Disability Forum, and the European Federation of Public Service Unions asked the European Parliament (01 July) for an [investigation to assess the failures](#) in addressing and managing the COVID-19 crisis in the long-term care sector across the European Union.
- EU Fundamental Rights Agency publishes (30 June) a [third report on the impact of COVID-19 on fundamental rights](#) including [a focus on older people](#).
- The European social service sector published (25 June) a [joint position paper](#) calling for recognition of the sector and urgent action to develop the cohesion and resilience of social services in Europe.

### Other COVID-19 news

- AGE Platform Europe published [an opinion](#) (16 June) alerting on the rising number of cases of elder abuse during the pandemic and pointing at the need to tackle ageism as the root cause of it.
- All resources from the WHO regarding older persons and COVID-19 are now on [one dedicated page](#).

## Practice Issues

**The Scottish Government** has released [guidance on the extended use of medical face masks](#) by staff within residential healthcare settings such as acute adult, mental health and community hospitals and care homes.

**Turas Learn** has a new video resource – Obtaining a Coronavirus (COVID-19) swab test in Care Homes is now available on Turas Learn to provide information and key steps to follow to obtain a swab test from people in care homes. Its focus is on how you safely and correctly perform a swab test in the throat and nose, and includes packaging of the specimen on completion of the test. You can access the video [here](#).

## Research in care homes

**ENRICH (Enabling Research in Care Homes)** brings together care home staff, residents and their families with researchers to set up and run studies effectively and collaboratively in care homes. You can access their website [here](#).

**CHAIN (Contact Help Advice and Information Network)** is an on line mutual support network for people

working in health and social care. It provides a simple and informative way for people to contact each other, advertise events, exchange ideas and share knowledge. CHAIN has a dedicated care home section. See [the CHAIN website](#) for more information and the opportunity to join the network free of charge to get the email alerts.

## Creativity in Care Homes

There have been wonderful projects taking place in care homes. [Have a look](#) at how some staff worked with residents to recreate iconic album covers.

The team at Luminate, Scotland's creative ageing organisation, have worked with artists from all over Scotland to create a series of 30 films aimed at older people. The artists all work regularly with older people in care homes and in community settings, and they have transferred their usual face-to-face approaches to offer creative activities on film for older people to do at home or in a care home. Activities include craft, poetry, music and dance, and range from a 1960s seated dance workshop and a drumming session using kitchen utensils, to craft activities using recycled materials. The drumming film, as well as 3 singing films, all have accompaniment tracks that you can download and use in your care home.

The films and soundtracks are available on [Luminate's website](#). The Luminate team are now making future plans, and – if you try any of the films – they'd really appreciate it if you could spare a few minutes to give them some feedback. They are operating [a short online survey](#), and by completing it there's a chance to be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 book token! Luminate@Home is supported by Baillie Gifford, co-produced by Graeme Roger, and presented in partnership with Scottish Care.

## COVID-19 Library

### Weekly Recommended Professional Reading

We have two papers for you to read this week. The first is a policy document in which Professor David Bell and colleagues from the University of Stirling explore key trends about the impact of coronavirus in Scotland's care homes.

- [Scottish care homes and COVID-19](#)

The second is an editorial from the BMJ which highlights the difficulties of managing information collected in care homes in a cohesive and national manner.

- [COVID-19 and lack of linked datasets for care homes](#)

### Light Reading

- [An appreciative inquiry into older adults' pain experience in long term care facilities: a pain education initiative](#) (2020) by Jennifer N. Auxier, Sian Roberts, Lauren Laing, Lee Finch, Sara Tung and Lillian Hung

This article reports on a study that used appreciative inquiry to identify enabling factors for effective pain management for older adults in two care homes. The research brings to the fore the importance of helping all staff to understand their role and have the opportunity to enhance their skills and confidence in pain management. The article addresses a valuable area and introduces an approach to pain management that should be of wide interest.

- [Impact of infection outbreak on long-term care staff](#) (2020) by Petri Embregts, Wietske van Oorsouw, Sara Nijs.

The article is a rapid review of the literature focusing on the impact of the pandemic on staff working with older people and people with an intellectual disability. The work reviewed suggested that psychological outcomes of healthcare staff serving older people covered three themes: emotional responses (i.e., fears and concerns, tension, stress, confusion, and no additional challenges), ethical dilemmas, and reflections on work attendance. The research identified suggestions to support and protect care staff and these were related to education, provision of information, housing, materials, policy and guidelines.

## The Editorial Team

We are a small team from the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Robert Gordon University (RGU). Angela Kydd, Clinical Professor in Nursing RGU / NHSG (editor); Piotr Teodorowski, Research Assistant (deputy editor); Dr Zoi Papadatrou, lecturer adult nursing; Maria Velo Higuera, lecturer midwifery; Colin MacLean, librarian; Rahul Oza, Online Learning Developer.

## News on our Deputy Editor

Piotr Teodorowski is leaving the editorial team, RGU and Scotland to take up a funded doctoral study in Health Services Research at the University of Liverpool. We are delighted for him and wish him well. We are of course sorry to lose him and if any one is interested in becoming deputy editor please contact Angela Kydd ([a.kydd@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:a.kydd@rgu.ac.uk))

### For further information, please contact:

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